

REMARKS

The examiner has maintained that the feature recited in claim 25 is not shown in the drawings. Claim 25 has been cancelled without prejudice to obviate this objection.

Claims 17 features a method of making a cutting element for a safety razor blade unit comprising the steps of providing a wafer of single crystal material having a surface lying in a predetermined plane of the crystallographic structure, selectively removing crystal material at the surface by employing an etching process to form a planar cutting element inclined at an acute angle to the surface plane and having a sharp cutting edge substantially at the surface plane.

Because Applicants' cutting element is used in a safety razor for wet shaving, the cutting edge must be substantially at the surface plane of the cutting element, where it can contact the skin during shaving.

Claims 17, 18, 20-22 and 24-26 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by Erdmann, and claims 19 and 23 as unpatentable over Erdmann in view of "APA."

The "shearing blades" described by Erdmann are intended for use in electric ("electronic") shavers. As Erdmann explains, such blades (often referred to in the art as "foils") have perforations through which hairs extend during shaving. The hairs are then cut, not by movement of the blade itself, but by the interaction of the lower, cutting surface of the blade with electrically-driven shearing knives. This type of cutting is described, for example, in U.S. Patent No. 6,826,835, as well as many other patents describing electric shavers. As a result, the cutting edges 12 of Erdmann's blades are not positioned at the surface plane (surface 2) of Erdmann's blade. Instead, they are recessed from the surface, at the bottom of each aperture.

Because the limitations of claim 17 are not met by Erdmann, claim 17 and the claims that depend therefrom are not anticipated.

Moreover, modifying Erdmann's blades to include a sharp edge at the surface plane would serve no purpose, and could in fact interfere with the proper shaving performance of Erdmann's razors.

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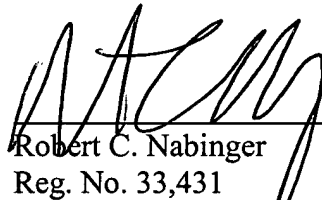
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"APA" does not add anything of relevance, and thus Applicants respectfully request that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103 also be withdrawn.

Applicants will not address herein the Examiner's comments regarding Applicants' previous remarks. This is not intended as a concession that the Examiner's position is correct. It is simply believed that the above remarks place the claims in condition for allowance, rendering further comment unnecessary.

Please apply any charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050, referencing Attorney Docket No. 00216-645002.

Respectfully submitted,



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